

NSC BRIEFING

25X1 4 August 1954

INDIAN MOVES AGAINST PORTUGUESE POSSESSIONS

I. Current Situation

A. Indian-inspired "volunteers," began 22 July "liberate" isolated parts Portugal's three pockets in India--Goa, Damao and Diu--attempt repeat tactics used induce French cede their two remaining territories.

B. Portugal has announced "intransigent firmness" toward Indian pressure. Lisbon has:

1. Raised subject North Atlantic Council but did not ask action. US and UK admit applicability NAT Article 4 only--consultation, but no decision or action.
2. Sent about 2,000 reinforcements raising troop strength in India to estimated 5,000.

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Background

A. Indian Attitude

1. Portuguese pockets relics 16th century imperialism, offensive Indian nationalism--bases for smugglers.
2. Portuguese oppressing legitimate aspirations of people.
3. India not responsible for popular reaction--has no connection "volunteers," but Indian police stationed around "liberated" enclaves prevent return Portuguese
4. Indian Foreign Office assured US India not use force. 2

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B. Portuguese Attitude

1. Sentimental attachment.
2. Consciousness interests of Catholic Church.
3. Fear ouster from India may lead agitation in Africa.
4. Portuguese refused discuss question of transfer--take refuge in constitutional fiction territories oversea are integral and inalienable parts mother country.

III. Prospects

- A. Continuing tension--controlled by New Delhi, which can turn "volunteers" on-off at will.
- B. Possibility larger scale violence if scheduled 15 August Indian Independence Day march on Goa takes place.

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- C. In case violence, Portugal may invoke NAT Art. 4 - toothless but embarrassing for US and Britain - NATO certain portrayed by India as defending colonialism.
- D. British position particularly difficult - UK's ancient alliance Portugal and Indian membership Commonwealth. London reported trying moderate.
- E. Timing Indian move adds to possible embarrassment for West, since West presumably reluctant offend New Delhi while latter chairing Indochina truce supervision mechanism.